



Welcome



Welcome to the Spring Edition of the CDNT3 Leopardstown Children's Disability Network Teams Newsletter.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with our updates. Your continued support is essential in our mission to improve communication with families.

Warm regards,
The CDNT3 Team

Highlights

- ▶ **Advice Corner**
Support for developing fine motor skills this spring!
- ▶ **Parent Connect Café**
Read about our new parent support group, run by our amazing social work team.
- ▶ **Staff update**
Update around the team's staffing and student placements.
- ▶ **Events**
Details for some of our groups and workshops running in Spring 2026.

Advice Corner

Fine motor skill advice from our Occupational Therapists

Spring can be a great time to reset and focus on new skills. Fine motor skills are the small movements of the hands and fingers, such as pinching, grasping, and manipulating objects. These skills support everyday activities like eating with cutlery, writing and drawing, getting dressed, and self-care tasks.

Many fun everyday activities already support fine motor development. Games like Connect 4, Jenga, Lego, and Play-Doh help build hand strength and coordination, while colouring, drawing, and painting support early writing skills.

Dressing teddies or dolls is also a fun way to practice buttons, zips, and fastenings.

With Easter approaching, even more opportunities to work on these skills are available. Decorating or painting Easter eggs, coloring Easter pictures, or opening plastic eggs all use fine motor movements.

The Enable Ireland website has helpful video resources for parents, with tips on tasks such as using cutlery, dressing, and handwriting skills.



 **Video Resources**
enableireland.ie/resources

Getting Ready



Dressing



Zips & Buttons





Parent Connect Café

By Caitlin Bradshaw,
Social Worker

In January, we hosted our first Parent Support Coffee Morning! It was a lovely morning meeting and getting to know some of our parents whose children are actively attending the CDNT.

As a team, we recognise that parents of children with disabilities often face decisions, challenges, and situations that many other parents may never have to consider. From our conversations with families, we know this can be a very isolating experience, and how rarely others truly understand what daily life looks like for them.

With this in mind, we wanted to create a space where parents whose children attend our service can come together, meet one another, and feel supported. Our hope is that this monthly group becomes a safe and welcoming place for parents to make connections with others navigating similar journeys, helping to build a sense of community where there may have previously been isolation.

For the moment this group is for parents of children aged 2-8 attending the service, but as we continue to establish our social work service, we plan to create additional groups for parents of children of various ages attending the service.



Staff Update

New staff

We have recently welcomed a new senior speech and language therapist to CDNT3. We have had some changes within our admin department, and we are looking forward to welcoming our newest recruit in the coming weeks.

Student Placements

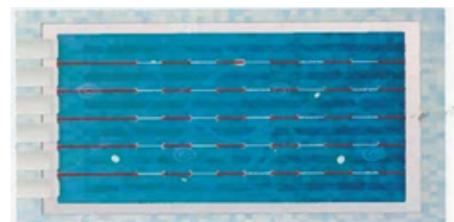
This term has been a busy one for students. Staff have been supporting students in Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy. Thank you to all the families who have facilitated this - student feedback on working in a CDNT has been very positive and many hope to apply to work on CDNTs when they graduate.

Pool Times



<https://enableireland.ie/services/sandymount-swimming-pool>

Enquiries about pool times can be made to:
smtswimbookings@enableireland.ie





Event	Date	Ages	Group	Description - <i>Please reach out to our email if you have any inquiries about events</i>
Parent Connect Cafe	4 th Wed of every month Next date: 25th Feb	2-8 yrs	Universal	A monthly coffee morning for parents of children (currently ages 2–8) attending the CDNT, designed to reduce isolation by offering an informal space to meet other parents who are having similar experiences. It supports parents to build connections, share experiences, and feel part of a community.
Understanding Your Child's Behavior	Wed 4 th and Wed 11 th Feb	All ages	Targeted	A parent support group to help make sense of what's driving their child's behavior (e.g., communication needs, sensory overload, anxiety, fatigue, transitions) and to spot patterns or triggers using simple tools. It helps parents build practical strategies, so they can prevent escalation and respond more consistently and confidently when behavior is challenging.
Cygnets	Wed 25 th Feb Running until 8 th April.	5-18 years with ASD diagnosis	Targeted	A parenting program designed to help parents develop their knowledge on how a child on the autistic spectrum experiences the world and to guide parents through practical strategies they can use with their children.
Parent Sensory Workshop	Tue 19th of March	All ages	Targeted	This group supports parents to understand how their child processes sensory information and how this can affect behavior, attention, sleep, and daily routines. It guides parents with practical strategies, like sensory-friendly routines, calming/regulation ideas, and simple home and environment adaptations, so they can better support participation at home, school, and in the community.
Transition to adulthood group	Date to be confirmed	16+	Targeted	A group that supports young people to plan for the move from children's services into adult life, covering areas like education, training, employment, independent living skills, community participation, and accessing adult health and disability supports. A date for a Parent Connect Cafe is also to be confirmed for the parents of our 16+ service users.
Hanan More than Words	March date to be set	2-5yrs	Targeted	The Hanan More Than Words programme is a 7 session workshop for parents/carers of autistic children or children who may benefit from social communication support.
Selective Eating: Parent Workshop and Support Group	Workshop: Tue 10 th Feb Support group: Date TBC in March	All ages	Targeted	This workshop and group helps parents understand why selective eating happens and learn practical strategies to reduce stress at mealtimes. It supports parents to build a consistent home plan, creating predictable routines, widening food variety gradually and safely, and managing behaviors while receiving peer support and guidance from the team.